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with the post of secretary of state, and in that office he continued till his death, which was brought on by the gout, at the age of sixty-three. He is said to have shown the ruling passion strong in death, lamenting to be taken off just as he began to be able to paint, and understand his art.

He enjoyed his good fortune with equal liberality and prudence, searching out and employing such artists as possessed merit, and were in indigent circumstances; but when visited by a famous chemist, who told him he had nearly discovered the philosopher's stone, and wished him to become a partner in his good luck, Rubens, pointing to his palette and pencils, answered, he was come too late, for that, by the help of those instruments, he had himself found the philosopher's stone some twenty years before.

In comparing Rubens with Titian, it has been observed, that the latter mingled his tints as they are in nature, that is, in such a manner as makes it impossible to discover where they begin or terminate: Rubens' method, on the contrary, was to lay his colours in their places, one by the side of the other, and afterwards very slightly mix them by a touch of the pencil. Now, as it is an acknowledged principle in the art, that the less colours are mingled the greater their purity and vivacity, and as every painter knows the latter method to be the most learned (requiring a deeper knowledge of the subject), to be attended with a greater facility, and, if properly managed, with greater truth and vivacity of effect, it must follow that this difference in their practice, which has been adduced to prove the inferiority of Rubens to Titian, indisputably proves the reverse; and though it must be allowed, perhaps, that, in practice, he at times uncovered too much the skeleton of his system, and rendered his tints too visible for a near inspection, we can have no doubt that, on the whole, he was the most profound theorist; that more may be learnt from him respecting the nature, use, and arrangement of colours than from any other master; and that had he not been, in some measure, the dupe of his own powers, his name would have stood first in the first rank of colourists.

Rubens, like other men of his degree of eminence, produced a multitude of scholars and imitators, to whom he stood in the place of nature, and whose excellence can only be measured by their proximity to, or distance from, their great archetype. The best of their works are now probably, and not improperly, attributed to him, from whose mind the principle that directed them emanated. From him they learned to weigh the powers of every colour, and balance the proportion of every tint; but, destitute of his vigorous imagination, the knowledge of his principle became, in their hands, a mere palliative of mental imbecility (leaves without trunk), and served only to lacquer over poverty of thought and feebleness of design, and to impart a sickly magnificence to stale mythological conceits, and clumsy forms of gods without dignity, goddesses without beauty, and heroes without energy; which disgust the more for the abortive attempt to conceal, by colouring, the want of that which colour can never supply.

Such will always be the success of exclusive endeavours to copy the manner of a particular individual, however great his powers. The proper use, continues Opie, of the study of our predecessors is to open and enlarge the mind, facilitate our labours, and give us the result of the selection made by them of what is grand, beautiful, and striking, in nature. A painter, therefore, ought to consider, compare, and weigh in the balance of reason, the different styles of all distinguished masters; and, whatever mode of execution he may choose to adopt, his imitation should always be general, and directed only to what is truly excellent in each: he may follow the same road, but not tread in the same footsteps; otherwise, to borrow a metaphor from a celebrated artist of former days, instead of the child, he will be more likely to become the *grandchild* of nature.

A GOSSIP ABOUT ART AND ARTISTS.

Under a title like this, a man of any imagination, talent, or love of art, might write a volume. On the present occasion, however, a volume is not required, and therefore it will be necessary to say what we have to say in as brief a manner as possible; not, however, that the subject demands brevity, but rather that the space compels it.

We enter a picture-gallery; we stand, perchance, alone in the silent room; on all sides are evidences of genius and power, and we pause entranced before them. A feeling something akin to that experienced when listening to beautiful music,—a world of memory and association beyond the world of consciousness and fact,—comes gently across the senses, and we yield to the charm of the place without effort or remorse.

This, however, is only the feeling of the moment. In a little while the curiosity of the spectator overcomes the awe of the mere visitor, and he begins to examine with attention the details of the various pictures around him. In just this way the searcher after art-truth approaches his subject. At first he is astounded at the vastness of its dimensions, and is inclined rather to acknowledge its mysticism and strange power than to attempt the elucidation of the mystery or to dream of overcoming its difficulties. Soon, however, his mind becomes more and more familiarised with the aspect of things, and he is enabled first to dissect, and finally to comprehend, his sensations. And thus he is prepared to enter upon an examination of those art-triumphs which have become the glories of the world; thus is he enabled to trace the various schools of painting by their own inherent peculiarities, from the distant period when the picture over the great altar was the poor man's Bible and teacher, to the latest expositions of art-progress in the galleries of London, Paris, and Dresden; and thus in the end he becomes a disciple and lover of Art,—being initiated into its mysteries, and becoming familiar with its many phases—rather than an outward gazer upon things incomprehensible.

Now it must be understood at once—for without this understanding both reader and writer will be apt to go astray—that the illustrations of the painter's art are not merely calculated to charm and gratify the senses, but that they are capable of refining and elevating the mind, and inspiring the heart with every good and noble sentiment. What poetry is to the ear painting is to the mind. Indeed, every painter must be more or less a poet, a creator; bringing to the surface the hidden greatnesses of human motives, and instilling into the human mind, by the exercise of his art, a love of order and harmony of design,—in fact, an admiration of the beautiful.

These are the highest manifestations of the artist's power; but if we take a somewhat lower standard of excellence,—if we look upon the painter as simply appealing to the universal heart of mankind through the feelings and sentiments common alike to the learned and the ignorant, we shall still find that every agreeable impression made by a beautiful and truthful picture, every remembrance of a natural object reproduced on the glowing canvas, every representation of the figures and countenances of those whom we have been taught to consider as among the world's great—exerts upon the mind a benign and salutary influence. Cicero, speaking of the Fine Arts, declares that "they nourish us in our youth and invigorate old age; they embellish the most fortunate situation, and console us under disasters of persecution; they accompany us day and night in our journeys and in our retreat from the world; and even when our minds are not disposed to profit by their instruction, we ought still to hold them in a just admiration, finding that to those who possess them they afford the most delicious gratifications."

If we search through the mazes of antiquity, we shall find that the art of painting exercised an influence superior even to that of poetry; for the simple reason, that the understanding is sooner reached through the eye than the ear. The empire of art has extended through every age and over every country—the savage and remote, no less than the refined and familiar.

In the rudest period of existence—it has been well observed—the love of imitation seems to have been inherent in the nature of man; and the variety of colours and forms appear to have been among the primitive sources of his enjoyments. The desire of imitating naturally led him to trace—coarsely enough, perhaps — the objects which most interested his ments, and make choice of such shells and stones as are of the most brilliant and varied hue with which to decorate their persons. Of course the union of colour and design have in no cases been simultaneous; but it would appear that no sooner had the rudest barbarians made the discovery that they were capable of imitating natural objects in colours, than the germ of painting took root in the soil of human ingenuity. And the seed, having once fallen on good ground, has fructified amazingly.

It would be somewhat beyond our purpose to trace the progress of this beautiful art from its first rude beginning—among the people of India, China, and Egypt, probably—to the comparative perfection it attained in ancient Greece, Etruria, and

THE SYREN OF THE RHINE. BY CARL BEGAS.

observation. Hence, instead of attempting to attribute the origin of design to any precise period or particular nation, it may be more reasonably presumed to have been indigenous in every country where human reason has in any degree developed itself, and may be said to have been coeval with our existence.

In this way only can the origin of painting be really described. The most untutored among the savages of various parts of the world—men who seem to have possessed but few ideas of clothing, building, or even the rudest forms of cookery —have been found, almost invariably, to be sensible of the attraction of colour and design. They select the most beautiful plumage of their birds wherewith to embellish their vest-

Rome; we may rather, therefore, turn our attention to its state after its revival in Europe after the downfall of the Imperial Empire.

Poetry, painting, and sculpture, says Allan Cunningham, are of the same high order of genius; but, as words provide at once shape and colour to our thoughts, poetry has ever led the way in the march of intellect: as material forms are ready made, and require but to be skilfully copied, sculpture succeeded; and as lights and shadows demand science and experience to work them into shape, and endow them with sentiment, painting was the last to rise into elegance and sublimity. In this order these high arts rose in ancient Greece, and in the like order they rose in modern Italy; but

none of them reached true excellence till the light of knowledge dawned on the human mind, nor before civilisation, following in the steps of barbarism, prepared the world for the reception of works of polished grace and tranquil grandeur.

From the swoon into which the fine arts were cast by the overthrow of the Roman empire, they were long in awakening: all that was learned or lofty was extinguished;—of painting there remained but the memory, and of sculpture, some broken stones, yet smothered in the ruins of temples and cities. The rules which gave art its science were lost; the knowledge of colours was passed away, and that high spirit, which filled Italy and Greece with shapes and sentiments allied to heaven, had expired. In their own good time, painting and sculpture arose from the ruins in which they had had preached down the altars and temples of the heathen, and rebuked their lying gods into eternal silence.

Though sculpture and painting arose early in Italy, and arose with the mantle of the Christian religion about them, it was centuries before they were able to put on their full lustre and beauty. For this, various causes may be assigned. The nations, or rather wild hordes, who ruled where consuls and emperors once reigned, ruled but for a little while, or were continually employed in expeditions of bloodshed and war. The armed feet of the barbarians had trodden into dust all of art that was elegant or beautiful:—they lighted their campfires with the verses of Euripides or Virgil; they covered their tents with the paintings of Protogenes and Apelles, and they repaired the breaches in the walls of a besieged city with the

JUPITER AND THE GOAT.—JACOB JORDAENS.

been overwhelmed; but their looks were altered; their air was saddened; their voice was low, though it was, as it had been in Greece, holy, and it called men to the contemplation of works of a rude grace, and a but dawning beauty. These "sisters-twin" came at first with pale looks and trembling steps, and with none of the confidence which a certainty of pleasing bestows; they came, too, with few of the charms of the heathen about them:—of the scientific unity of proportion, of the modest ease, the graceful simplicity, or the almost severe and always divine composure of Greece, they had little or none. But they came, nevertheless, with an original air and character all their own; they spoke of the presence of a loveliness and a sentiment derived from a nobler source than pagan inspirations; they spoke of Jesus Christ, and his sublime lessons of peace, and charity, and belief, with which he statues of Phidias and Praxiteles; the desires of these barbarians were all barbarous. Painting and sculpture had to begin their labours anew; all rules were lost; all examples, particularly of the former, destroyed; men unable, therefore, to drink at the fountains of Greece, did not think for centuries of striking the rock for themselves. The Christian religion, for which art first wrought, demanded sentiment rather than shape; it was a matter of the mind which was wanted; the personal beauty of Jesus Christ is nowhere insisted upon in all the New Testament; the earliest artists, when they had impressed an air of holiness or serenity on their works, thought they had done enough; and it was only when the fears of looking like the heathen were overcome, and a sense of the exquisite beauty of Grecian sculpture prevailed, that the geometrical loveliness of the human form found its way

into art. It may be added, that no modern people, save the Italians alone, seem to share fully in the high sense of the ideal and the poetic, visible in the works of Greece.

The first-fruits of this new impulse were representations of Christ on the Cross; of his forerunner, St. John; of his Virgin Mother; and of his companions, the Apostles. Our Saviour had a meek and melancholy look; the hands of the Virgin are held up in prayer; something of the wildness of the wilderness was in the air of St. John, and the twelve Apostles were kneeling or preaching. They were all clothed from head to heel; the faces, the hands, and the feet, alone were bare: the sentiment of suffering or rejoicing holiness alone was aimed at. The artists of the heathen religion wrought in a far different spirit; the forms which they called to their canvas, and endowed with life and beauty, were all, or mostly naked; they saw and felt the symmetry and exquisite harmony of the human body, and they represented it in such elegance, such true simplicity and sweetness, as to render their nude figures the rivals in modesty and innocence of the most carefully dressed. A sense of this excellence of form is expressed by many writers. "If," says Plato, "you take a man as he is made by nature, and compare him with another who is the effect of art, the work of nature will always appear the less beautiful, because art is more accurate than nature." Maximus Tyrus also says, that "the image which is taken by a painter from several bodies, produces a beauty which it is impossible to find in any single natural body, approaching to the perfection of the fairest statues." And Cicero informs us, that Zeuxis drew his wondrous picture of Helen from various models, all the most beautiful that could be found; for he could not find in one body all those perfections which his idea of that princess required.

So far did the heathens carry their notions of ideal beauty, that they taxed Demetrius with being too natural, and Dionysius they reproached as but a painter of men. Lysippus himself upbraided the ordinary sculptors of his day, for making men such as they were in nature, and boasted of himself, that he made men as they ought to be. Phidias copied his statues of Jupiter and Pallas from forms in his own soul, or those which the muse of Homer supplied. Seneca seems to wonder that the sculptor having never beheld either Jove or Pallas, yet could conceive their divine images in his mind; and another eminent ancient says, that "the fancy more instructs the painter than the imitation; for the last makes only the things which it sees, but the first makes the things which it never sees." Such were also, in the fulness of time and study, the ideas of the most distinguished moderns. Alberti tells us that "we ought not so much to love the likeness as the beauty, and to choose from the fairest bodies, severally, the fairest parts." Da Vinci uses almost the same words, and desires the painter to form the idea for himself; and the incomparable Raphael thus writes to Castiglione concerning his Galatea: "To paint a fair one, it is necessary for me to see many fair ones: but because there is so great a scarcity of lovely women, I am constrained to make use of one certain idea which I have formed in my own fancy." Guido Reni approaches still closer to the pure ideal of the great Christian school of painting, when he wishes for the wings of an angel to ascend to Paradise, and see with his own eyes the forms and faces of the blessed spirits, that he might put more of heaven into his pictures.

Though abundance of figures of saints were carved, and innumerable Madonnas painted throughout Italy, in the earlier days of the Christian church, they were either literal transcripts of common life, or mechanical copies or imitations of works furnished from the great store-rooms of the Asiatic Greeks. There were thousands—nay, tens of thousands—of men, who wrote themselves artists, while not one of them had enough of imagination and skill to lift art above the low estate in which the rule and square of mechanical imitation had placed it. Nicola Pisano appears to have been the first who, at Pisa, took the right way in sculpture; his groups, still in existence, are sometimes too crowded; his figures badly designed, and the whole defective in sentiment; but he gave an impulse—communicated through the antique—to composition, not unperceived by his scholars, who saw with his eyes and wrought with his spirit. The school which he founded produced soon after the celebrated Ghiberti, whose gates of bronze, embellished with figures, for the church of San Giovani, were pronounced by Michael Angelo worthy to be the gates of Paradise. While the sister art took these large strides towards fame, painting lagged ruefully behind; she had no true models, and she had no true rules; but "the time and the man" came at last.

From out these rude materials the art of modern painting had its rise; and that we may the better understand the various characteristics that distinguish the several "schools," it may not be out of place to run rapidly over the history of each.

THE SCHOOL OF FLORENCE,

the earliest of those which are considered as among the modern, claims to have been founded by Giovanni Cimabue, who is hence called the restorer—though he may be more properly styled the founder, of the Italian or Epic style of painting. Cimabue was the first of his time who dared to step out of the beaten track and follow the bent of his own inclinations. Instead of reproducing the merely mechanical forms of the Greek artists, he began to group his figures with a bold sublimity, and astonish his patrons by his daring conceptions and vigorous style of colouring. All his compositions are of a scriptural or religious kind, for in truth, the church of his day—he was born in 1240, and died in 1300—was the artist's only patron. Cimabue gave tone and character to the paintings of his time, and the school of Florence, as the paintings of his successors are termed, is known and distinguished by the first intelligible symptoms of the grand and epic in their composition—Cimabue being the earliest of the modern painters to bring the art of design into anything like a system.

To Cimabue, the Michael Angelo of his age, succeeded Giotto the Raphael. Everyone knows the romantic history of this artist; how, from being the son of a shepherd, he lived to be patronised by princes and prelates, and how he became famous throughout Italy as the first painter and sculptor of his day. It would appear that to an intense love of the beautiful and really good natural talents, Giotto united a study of the antique more searching and comprehensive than had before been attempted. He painted historical pieces, in which groups of figures and architectural ornamentation were fittingly introduced, with backgrounds of Italian skies and blue hazy mountains; but, beside subjects such as these, his pencil was employed upon Madonnas and Apostles, and a series of pictures from the life of St. Francisco, the composition of which, says Lanzi, appear to be most surprising to one who examines them with attention. Giotto died in 1336, and the Florentines erected a statue in commemoration of his achievements.

About the period at which we have now arrived, other cities of Italy, stimulated by the example of Cimabue and Giotto, established schools of painting, which soon became characterised by peculiarities of their own. In Florence, however, the transition from the formal style of the earlier periods to the epic and historical manner of the moderns certainly took place.

Contemporaneously with the rise of power, grandeur, and wealth in the church, arose the arts of painting and sculpture in Italy; and patronised by the followers of the lowly Nazarene, the arts at length emerged from the darkness of ignorance, to become the glory of the fourteenth century and all succeeding time. The academies of art—or, more properly speaking, the schools of painting—established in Italy after the death of Cimabue are generally considered to be the Florentine, the Siennese, the Roman, the Neapolitan, the Venetian, the Mantuan, the Modenese, and the schools of Parma, Cremona, Milan, Ferrara, and Genoa. These together form what is called the Italian school of painting; and to these must be added the German, the Dutch, the Spanish, the French, and the English schools—the latter terms being, however, rather complimentary than actual.

Among the celebrated artists of the school or style of paint-

ing thus established, Stephano Florentino and his son Thomaso take rank next to Giotto. These with Taddeo Gaddi, Paolo Uccello, Manetta, Panicale, Masaccio, Raffaellino del Garbo, Domenico, and Corradi, carried the art far beyond the style in which they found it. In their hands painting became a living art, and to such a height did Massaccio rise in his profession, that Vasari avers of him that "what was executed before his time might be called paintings, but that his pictures seem to live, they were so true and so natural."

But the crowning triumph of Florence was yet to arrive, in the person of the celebrated painter, Leonardi da Vinci, who, without reference to colours, produced some of the finest designs that the world had hitherto seen,—one especially, "The Last Supper," yet remains unequalled and unapproachable in simplicity of treatment and grandeur of composition: This great artist was born in 1452, and died in 1520. During his life-time he had the satisfaction of knowing his fame to be acknowledged all over Italy and civilised Europe; but he had also the mortification of perceiving a rival rising up to dispute with him the patronage of kings and prelates, and to court the popularity which, at that time no less than now, seems ever to attend the steps of genius. This rival was the famous Michael Angelo Buonarroti, a man of whom it was said that he resolved to conquer fame by force, and to do nothing as other men had done before him.

After the death of Michael Angelo, which took place in 1563, many painters of eminence arose in Florence, but none approached the "regal and stately step" of their great master. None since have produced works in which anything like the grandeur and sublimity of Da Vinci or Angelo is observable. It is true, that the influence of their peculiar styles was felt by, and influenced the productions of, a host of painters who flourished after them, even to the time of Carlo Dolci, with whom the long line of Florentine artists may be said to have closed; and it is equally true, that the school of which they were well-known pupils, was for many years the most famous in Europe, but no great names succeed; and in the middle of the seventeenth century, when Pietro da Cortona was invited by Ferdinand II. to visit Florence, the great historical style of painting introduced by Cimabue may be said to have departed from the "fair city" for ever.

THE SCHOOL OF SIENNA

has been aptly termed the sister of the Florentine, displaying "a peculiar talent for invention, animating with glowing images the stories it represents, filling them with allegory, and forming them into fervid and poetic compositions." This school of painting, the second in Italy in point of time as well as fame, had its origin, say its panegyrists, in Greece and Rome; but more modest writers and truer friends to art do not go further back in their account than to the time of Mino, who lived in the days of Cimabue, and to whose talent and success the little state of Sienna owes, doubtless, the measure of fame she enjoys as one of the springs whence flowed the stream of genius which fertilised Italy and Europe during the fourteenth and few succeeding centuries. Bernardo da Sienna, who flourished in 1370, and painted saints and angels with much taste, Taddeo and his disciple and nephew Domenico Bartolo, Matteo di Giovanni, the first who painted in oils in Sienna, Razzi, and Francesco Vanni, who is said to have been the best artist of the school, are the most celebrated painters of Sienna; but their works are now little known or appreciated.

THE ROMAN SCHOOL

is little known before the days of its great master, Raphael, who gave to it, and to the works of all succeeding painters, a character of his own. "The historians of art," says Allan Cunningham, "on approaching the bright days in which Raphael, Michael Angelo, Corregio, Giorgone, and Titian, all flourished, pause to inquire why such men were sent into the world in clusters; and having settled that nature had a grand meaning in it, hasten to describe the wonder which they performed." But it would scarcely appear wonderful that an age so replete with wealthy patrons should have produced so many and so great painters. Raphael, the prince of them all, was born at Urbino, in 1483, and studied under his father, an artist of great abilities. It is not necessary in this place to record the events of the eminent artist's life, or to tell again how, with Da Vinci and Michael Angelo, he enjoyed the patronage of Leo the Great, and produced those amazing pictures which have won the admiration of all succeeding ages.

The Roman school, in which religion, poetry, philosophy, and romance, have each an honourable place, boasts of possessing among its painters such men as Julio Romano, the pupil of Raphael; Pellegrino Modena, Polidora, Caravaggio, who, from being a mechanical labourer in the Vatican, rose to be an artist of great celebrity; Zuccaro, and Carlo Mariotti. Many other names of fine painters might be mentioned, but by these will the Roman period of painting be principally known. Some broad lines of distinction mark the various schools of Italy at about this period, which it is as well to remember. The Florentine, Roman, and Bolognese styles are celebrated for their bold epic and historical grandeur of composition, being most of them paintings fitted only, by their extent of canvas, for the walls of palaces and churches. The school of Venice is known by its height of colour, and that of Sienna by its high poetic temperament and careful treatment. Of

THE NEAPOLITAN SCHOOL

of painting but little need be said; for though the wealth of Naples brought thither many artists from other cities of Italy, it had properly no school or style of its own before the time of Salvator Rosa and Giordano. These two names, however, are sufficient to give glory to any city. The style of Salvator Rosa is well known. He delights in savage magnificence and ruined grandeur; and in his pictures we see no summer clouds that are not lit up with streaks of fire, and no winter scenes that are not made gaunt, bare, and miserable. This great artist was famous for producing "savage scenery, broken rocks and caves, and desert plains." "His trees," says Lanzi, "are shattered, torn, and dishevelled, and in the atmosphere itself he seldom introduced a cheerful line, except occasionally a solitary sunbeam. His style was original, and may be said to have been conducted on a principle of savage beauty." Though perfect in itself, the style of Rosa has seldom been imitated with success.

Giordano, on the contrary, excelled in pictures of a more cheerfully animating description, in which numerous figures of men and horses were introduced, though he was no less successful in his saints and angels; a "Holy Family" of his at the Court of Spain having frequently been mistaken for a painting of Raphael's. With Paolo de Matteis and Francesco Solimene, the Neapolitan school, greatly famed as it once was, may be said to have expired.

THE SCHOOLS OF VENICE, MODENA, PARMA, BOLOGNA, FERRARA, AND GENOA,

though less celebrated than those we have already mentioned, have produced some famous painters. Among them may be mentioned Bartolemino and Giorgione, Sebastian del Piombo, and the world-known Titian; Tintoret and Bassano, Maritegna and Julio Romano.

Then again, in the sixteenth and two following centuries, we have, among the painters of these lesser schools, artists of undying reputation and undoubted genius. Such were Corregio, the glory of Parma; Baccaciano, the Montagna of Cremona; Ferrari, the Da Vinci of Milan; Sabbatino, the Raphael of Bologne; Domenichino, the pupil of Caracci; Guido, the "heaven-taught" painter of Ferrara; Barbieri, Girolamo de Carpi, Cambiaso and Castello of Genoa, and numerous others, of whom much might be written. But we must pass on to a very brief notice of

THE GERMAN SCHOOL.

Of the antiquity of Germany as a school of art, and of her claims to be considered a liberal patron of the artists of the thirteenth century, we shall not stop to inquire; for, till the time of Albert Durer, Germany can scarcely be said to have possessed any distinctive character in the arts. This celebrated

painter—who was born at Nuremburg, in 1471, and died in 1528, the wonder and pride of Germany, and of the whole artistic world of his day,—was destined not only to create for his native country a character for art, but to carry her fame into distant regions where her claims as an art-patron had not hitherto been recognised. Besides being a painter of no ordinary skill, he was famous as an engraver on various metals, the impressions from some of them being extremely valuable even in the present day. After Durer—who may be said to have created the German school, the chief characteristic of which is an allegorical and poetic treatment—Felix Meyer, Mathew Elias, Gaspard Netscher, Joachim Beisch, Rudoph Huber, Antony Faistenberger, Mengs, and Zoffang, are the prominent names. In this present day, German art, in spite of the efforts of her best artists, is apt to run into a kind of mysticism which by no means promises well for its future fame. Of the

DUTCH AND FLEMISH SCHOOLS

enough has been already said in the preceding papers in this sheet to give the reader a good idea of their leading characteristics. We may therefore pass on to

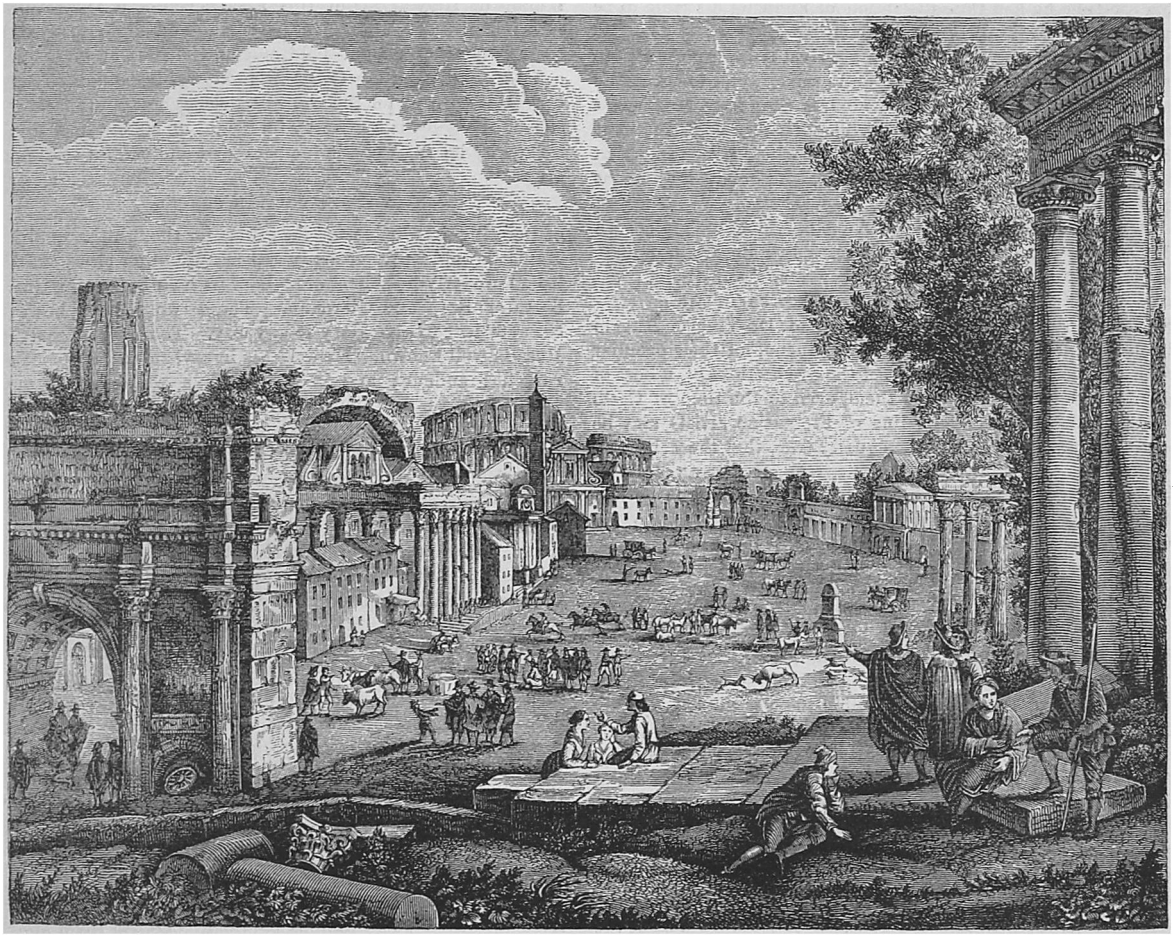
THE SPANISH SCHOOL.

Murillo, the chief boast of Spain, may be taken as a good specimen of the kind of paintings patronised by the Spanish people. From the semi-civilisation which, even now, exists in the Peninsula, it is easy to guess the kind of pictures which are tolerated by the priests and rulers. Hence, we find that Madonnas, Angels, Saints, and Scripture subjects for altar-pieces, are the only really good paintings in Spain. Some of the finest of these came into the possession of Soult during the great Peninsular war,—in what way it is not very difficult to imagine,—and now serve to decorate the mansions of the rulers of France.

Our space warns us that we must be brief. We have looked through the list of Spanish painters, and, not discovering one worthy to stand beside Murillo, we pass to a hasty consideration of

THE FRENCH SCHOOL.

As we approach the present time our gossip becomes of a rather more dangerous nature; though fortunately our acquaintance with the works of the French artists will not allow us to be very critical. We may content ourselves, therefore, with a mere mention of some of the most prominent of the French painters.



VIEW IN THE CAMPO VACCINO, THE ANCIENT ROMAN FORUM. BY CLAUDE LORRAINE.

The first really national efforts to establish a school of art in France were made by Francis I., who encouraged John Cousin—born 1538, died 1641—to paint Scripture pieces for church altars with much success. To him succeed Vouet, Gaspard Poussin, and the famous Claude Lorraine—an excellent engraving from one of whose paintings graces this page. The names of Le Brun and Watteau complete the list; though among the living artists of France are to be found some of the most profound and excellent in the world. Our engraving, "The Syren of the Rhine," from the celebrated legend of "Undine," is taken from a picture by a well-known French painter; it is full of grace and beauty, and tells its story unmistakably.

Of the English school of painting we shall take another opportunity of speaking, merely premising that, with a commerce-loving people, it is not devotional.